



AN ASSASSIN'S CREED® SERIES

VAN LENTE • CALERO

002

MAY '16  
COVER A



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# ASSASSIN'S CREED TEMPLARS

## BLACK CROSS

Darius Gift has fallen foul of a pretty face and a charming smile, jeopardizing his first mission for the Templar Order. But all is not completely lost... yet.

Out of the darkness appears Black Cross, in hot pursuit of the men who can lead him to his target, and the root of the evil polluting the Shanghai Rite. When Darius stumbles across his path, Black Cross finds himself guided by his moral compass to do what he can for the unfortunate boy...

 **TITAN COMICS**  
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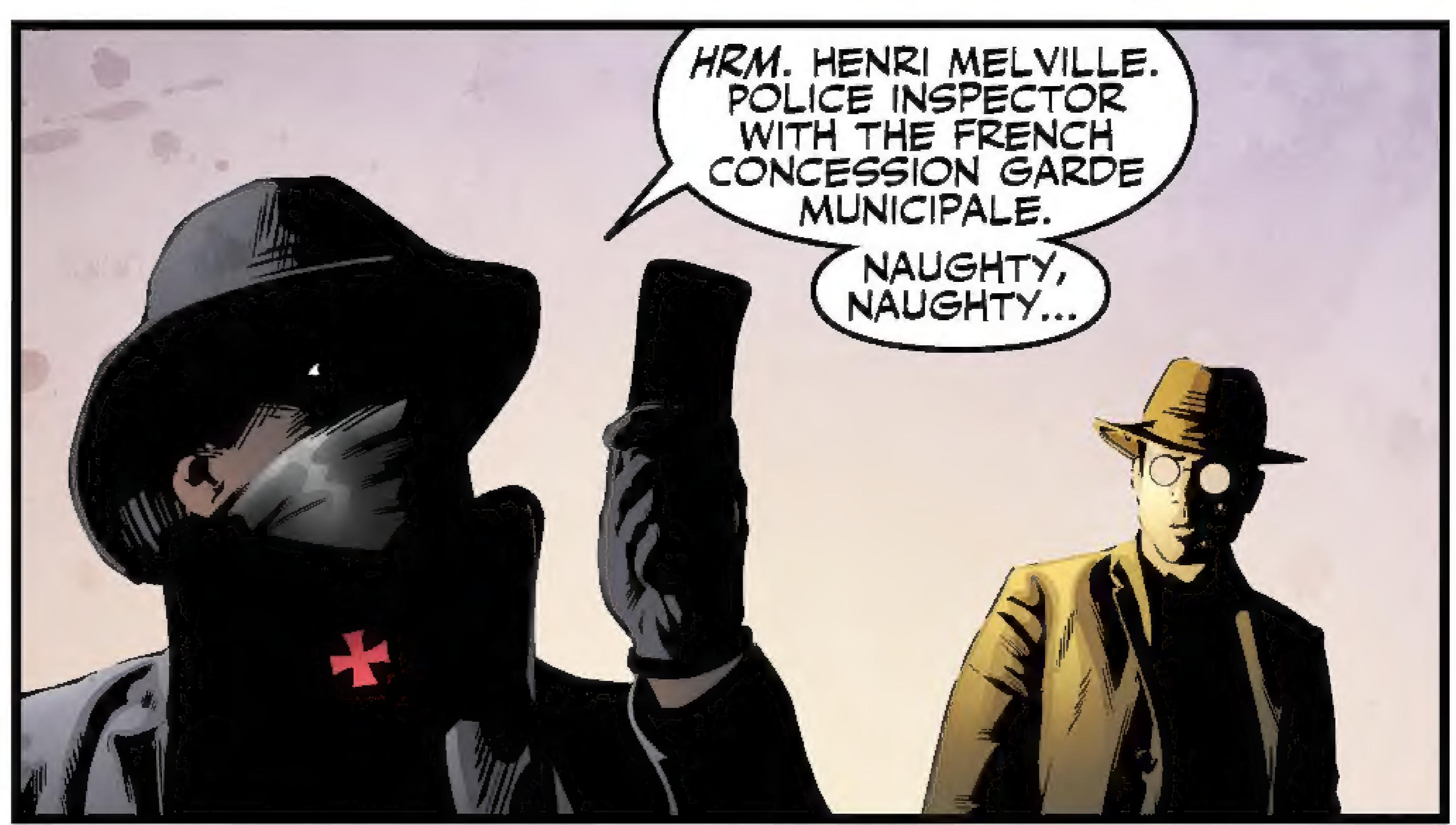
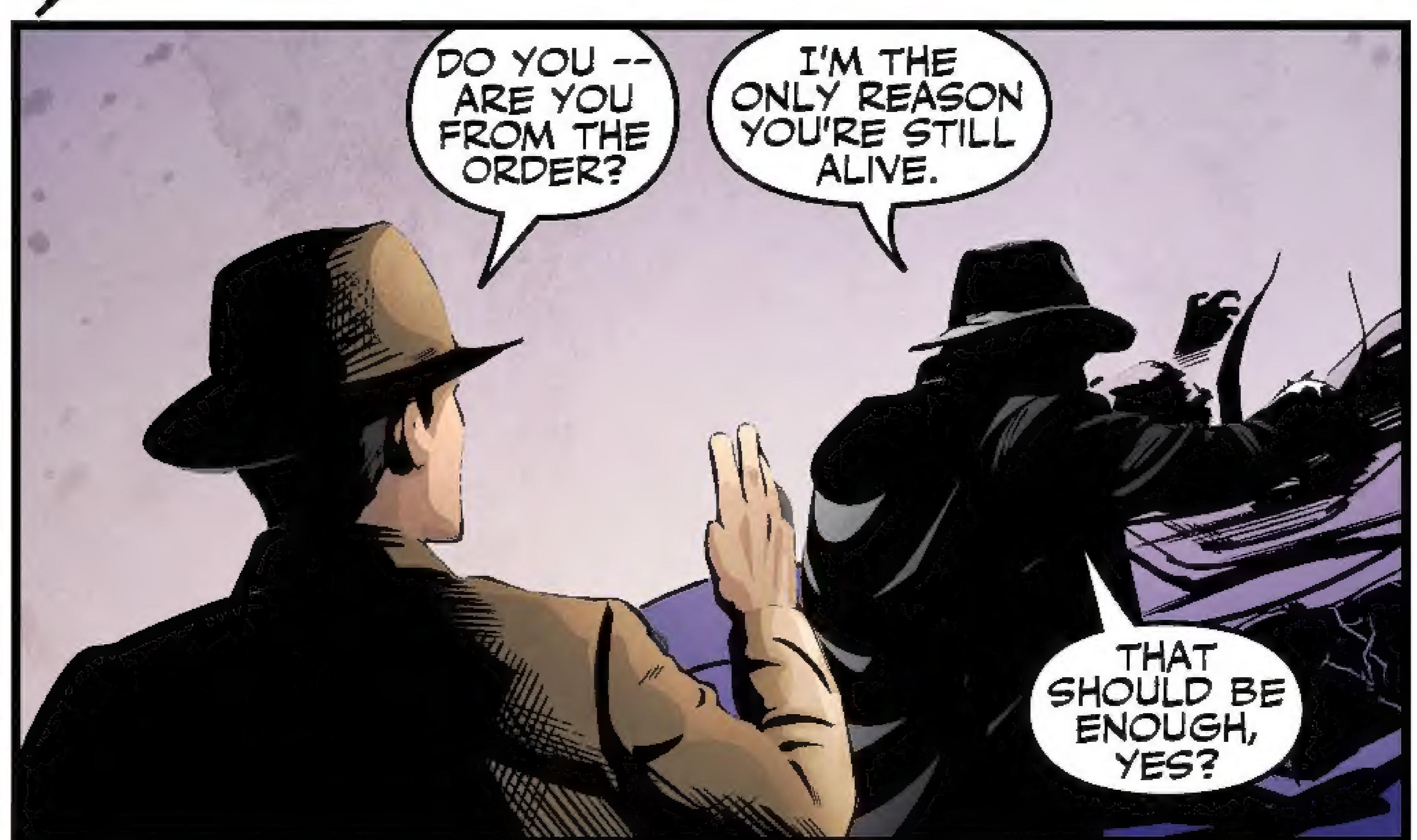
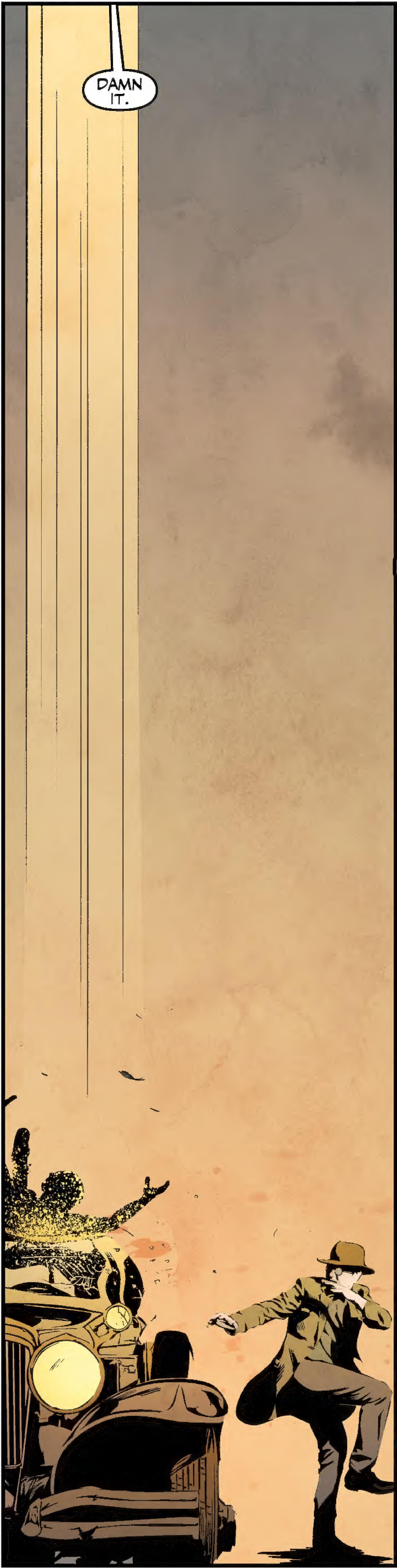
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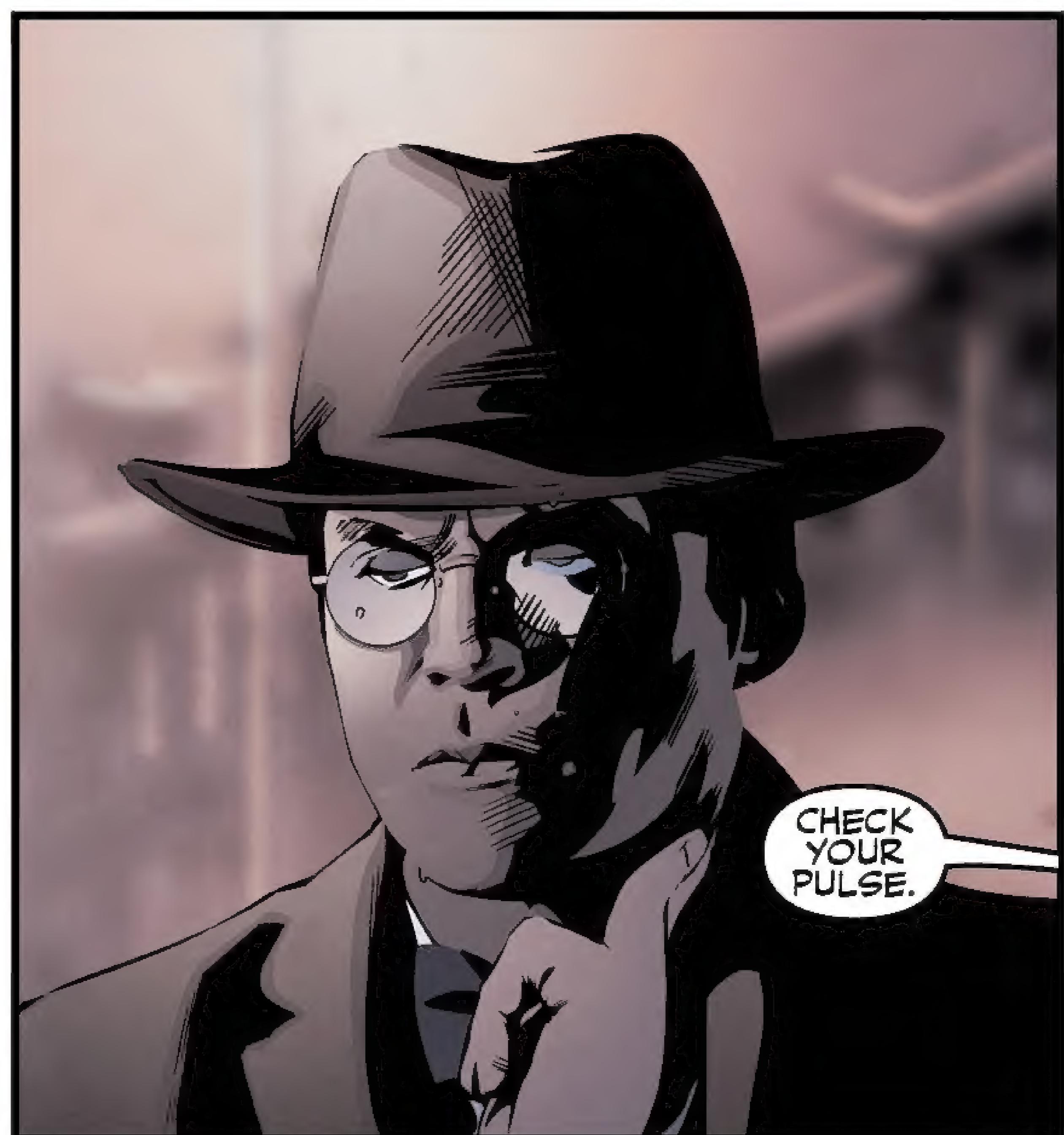
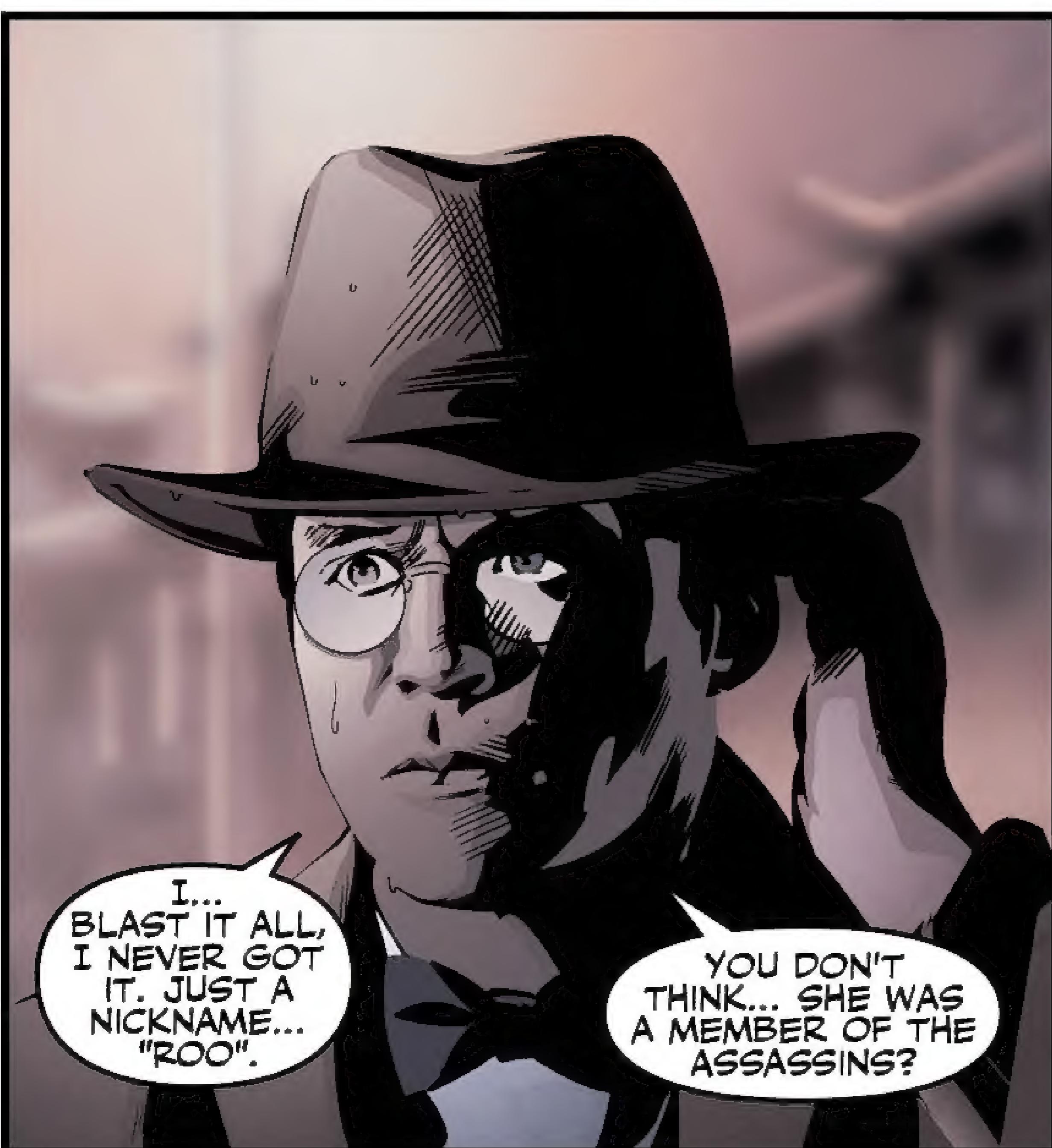
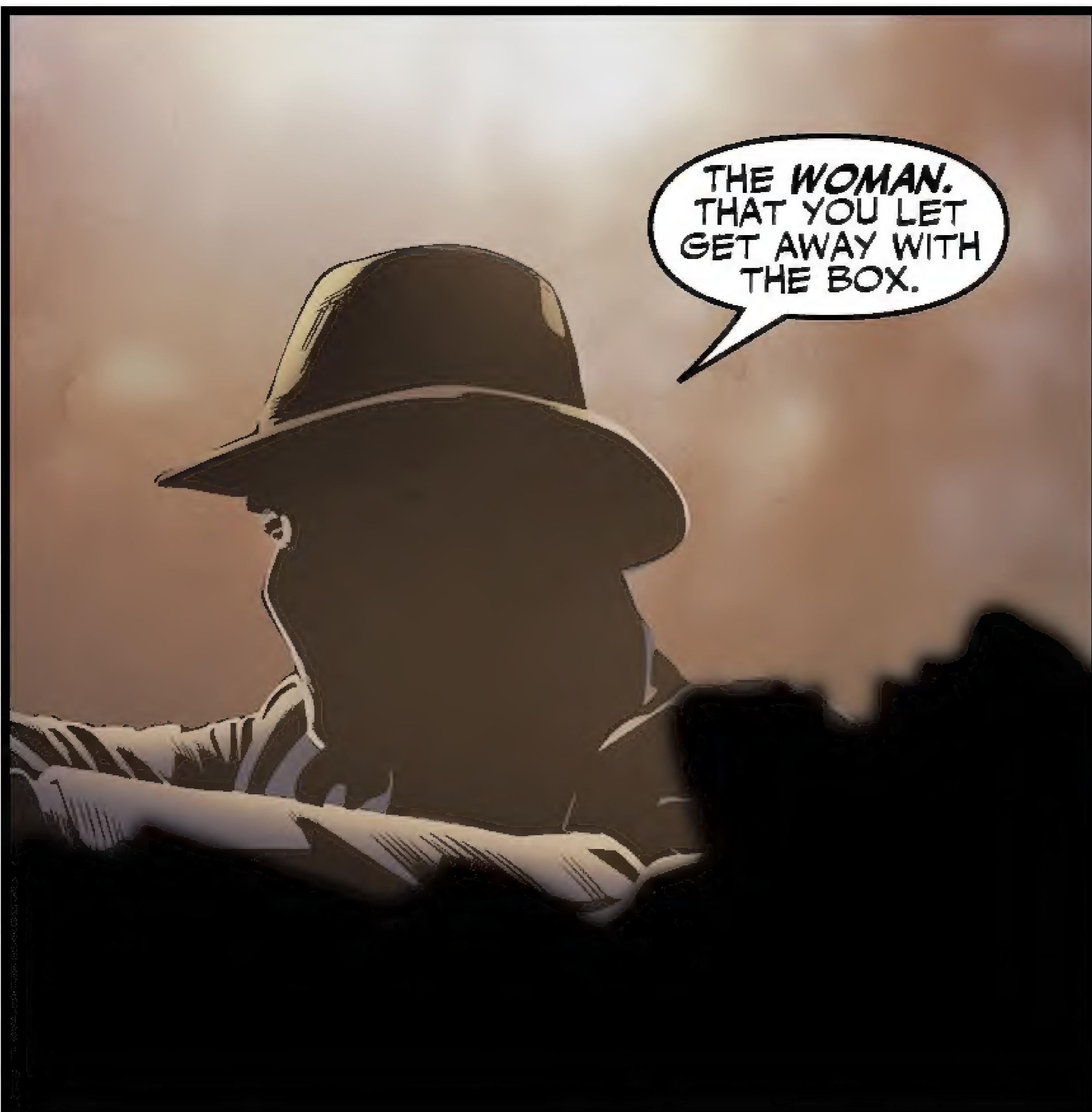
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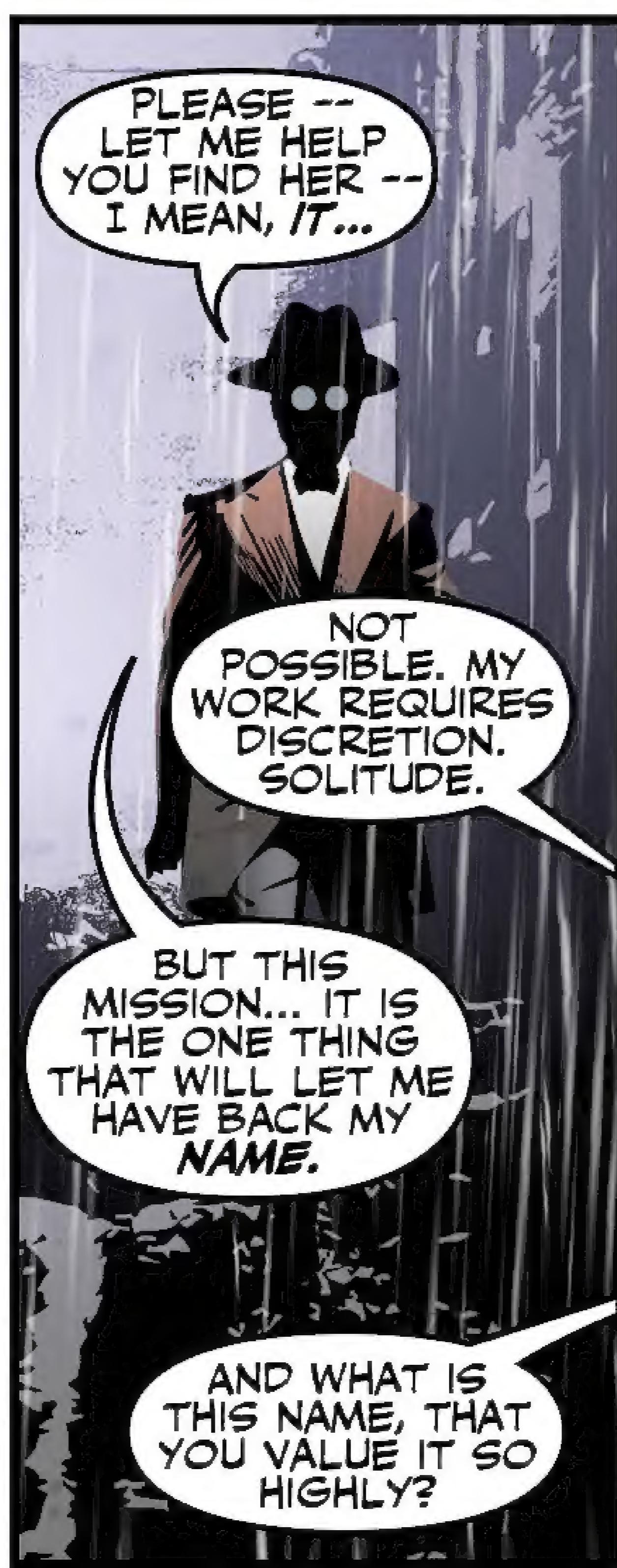
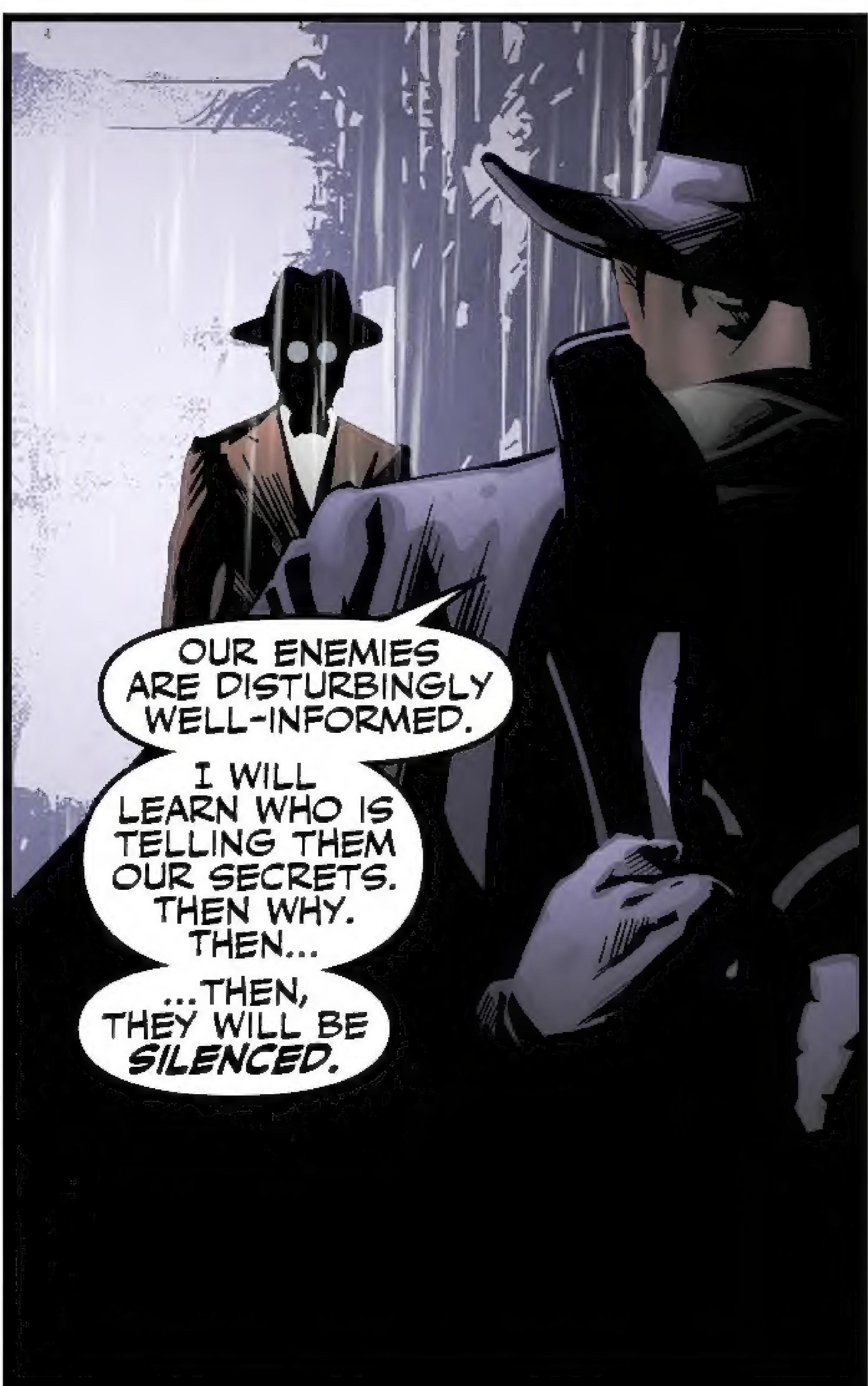
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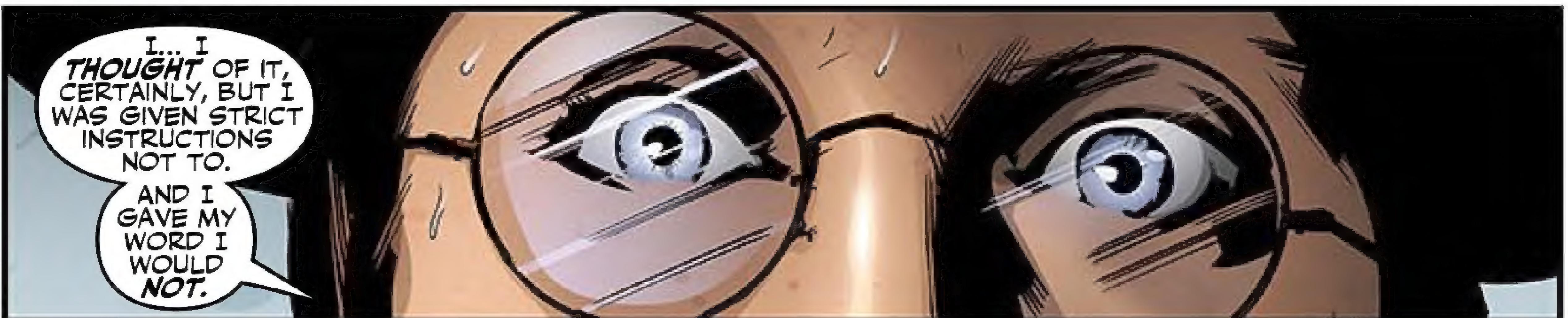
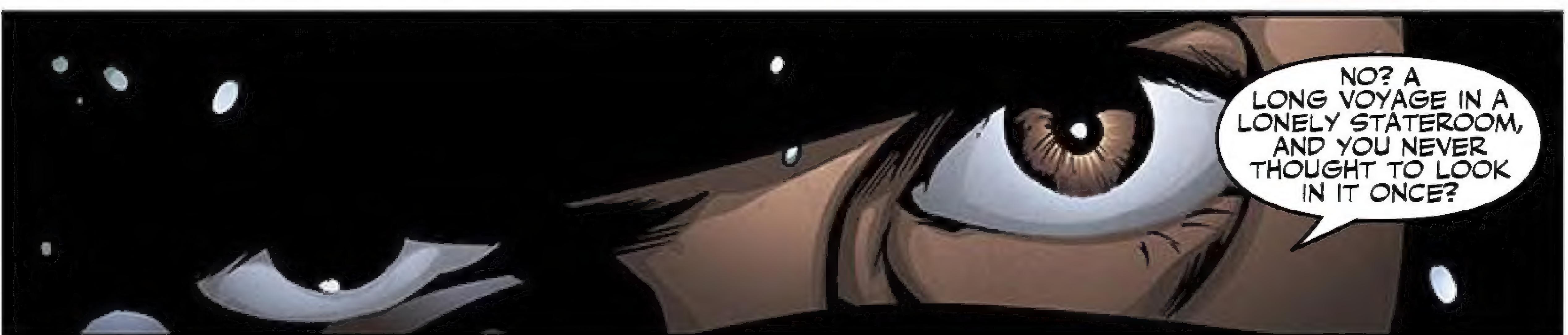


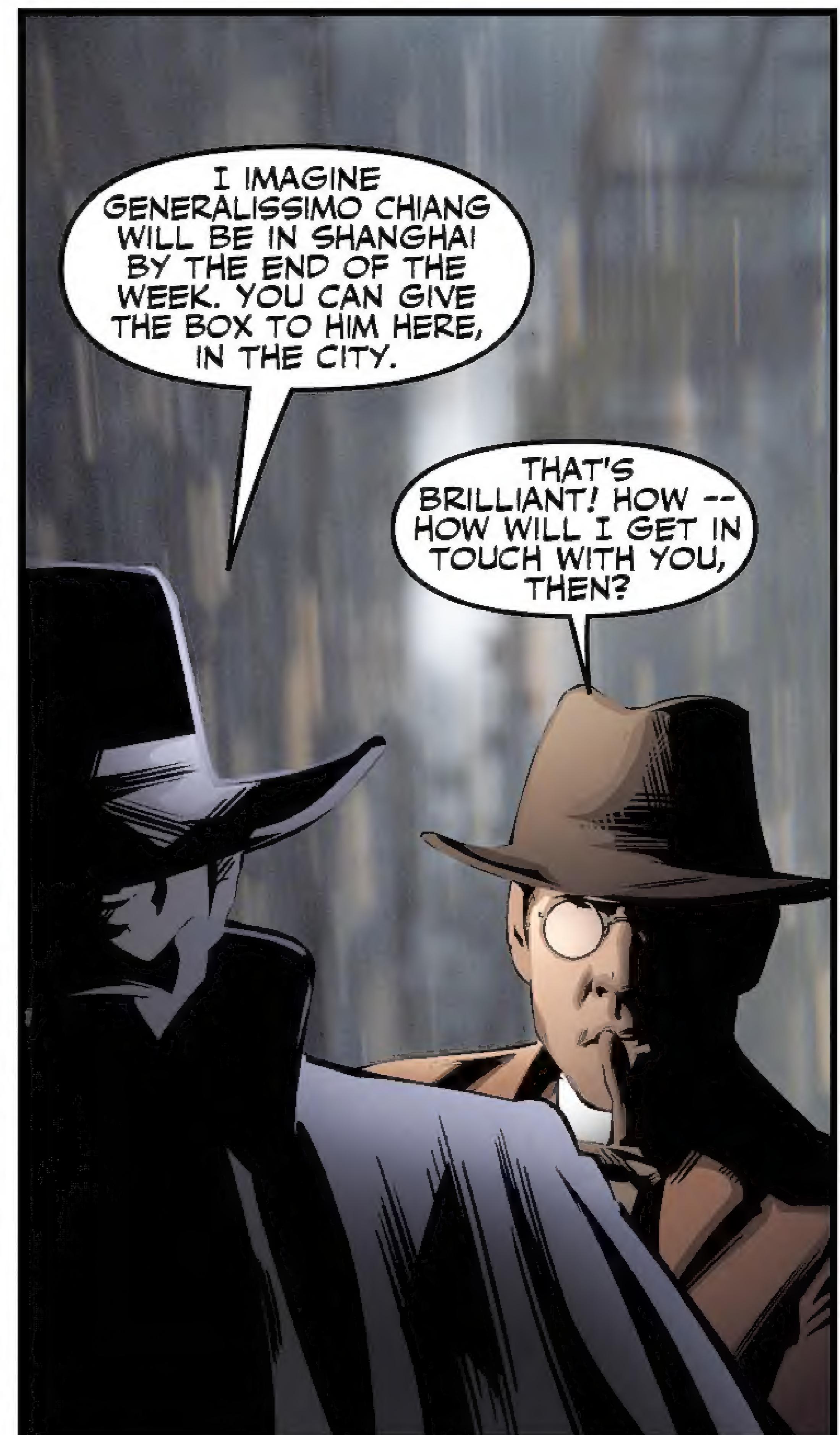
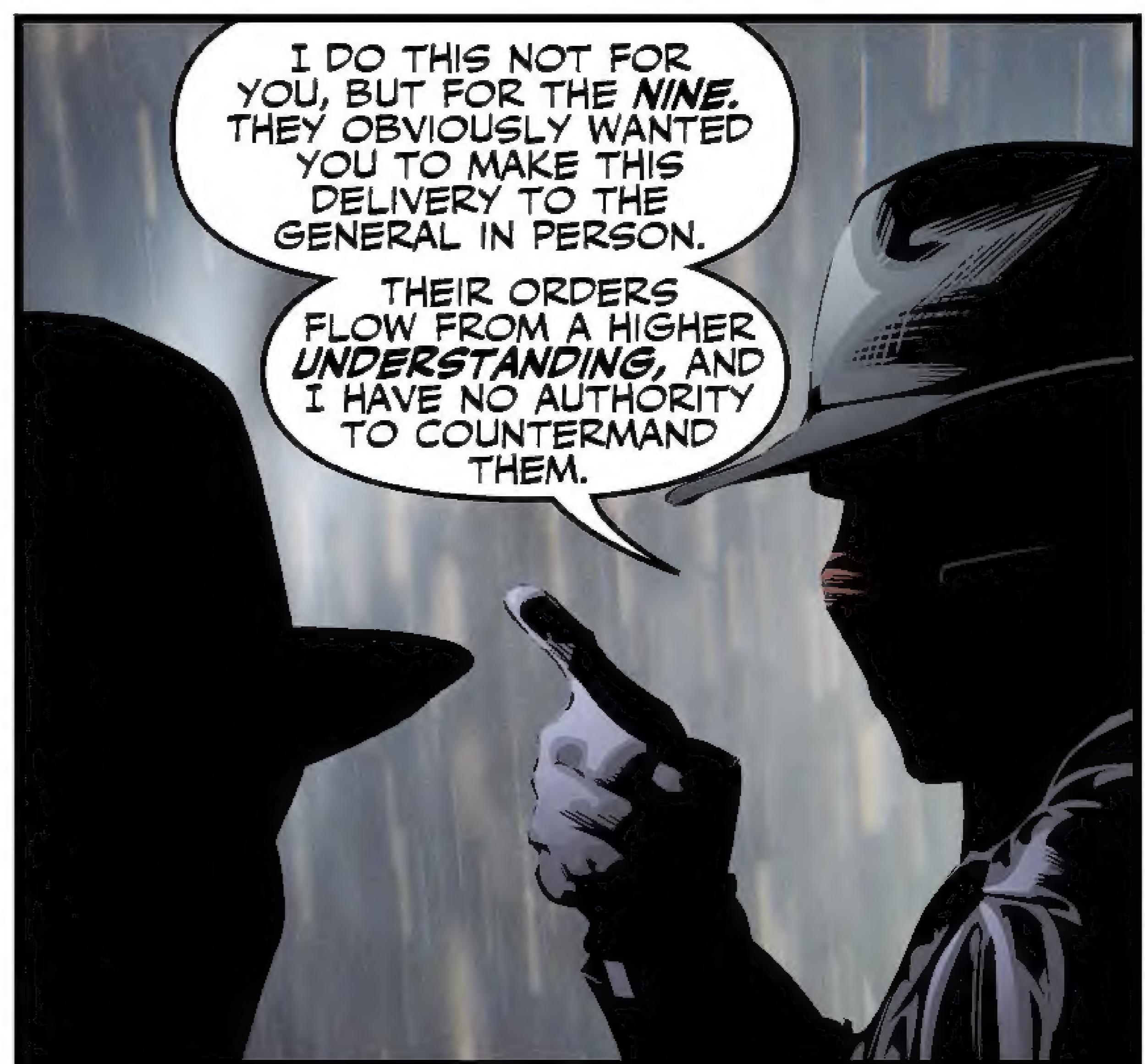
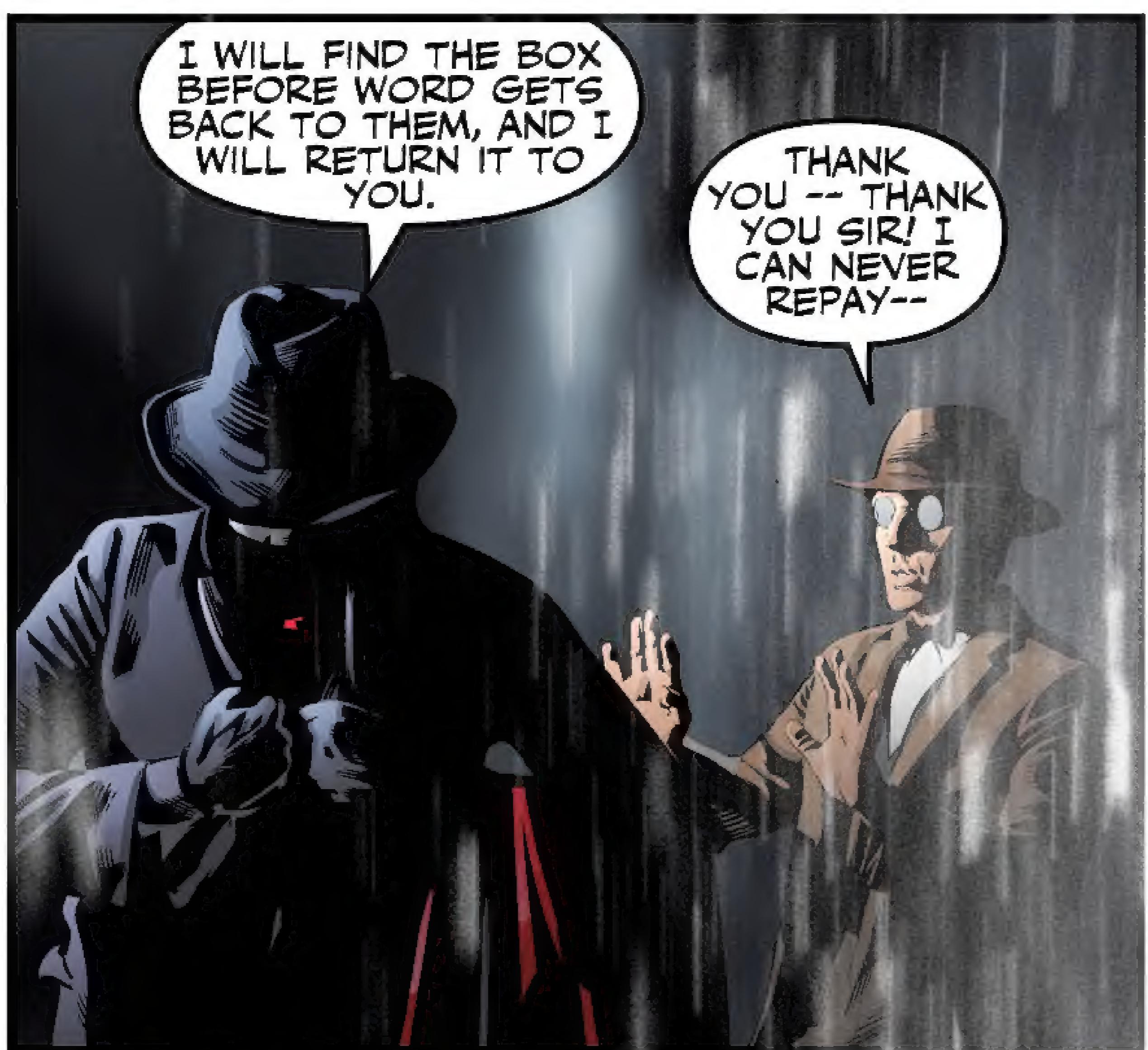


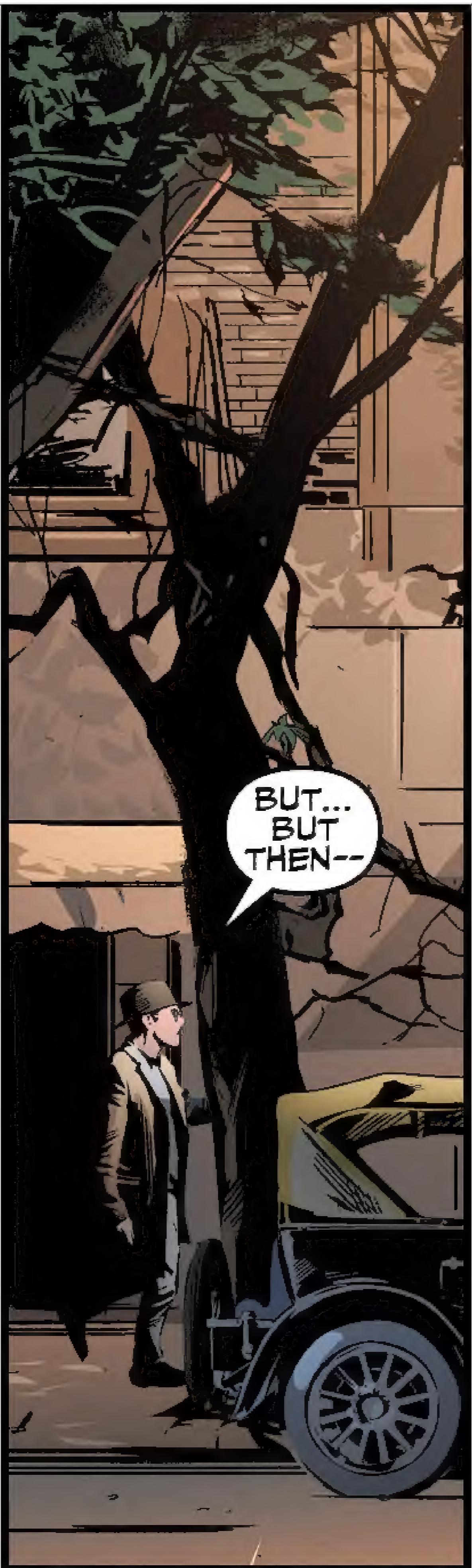


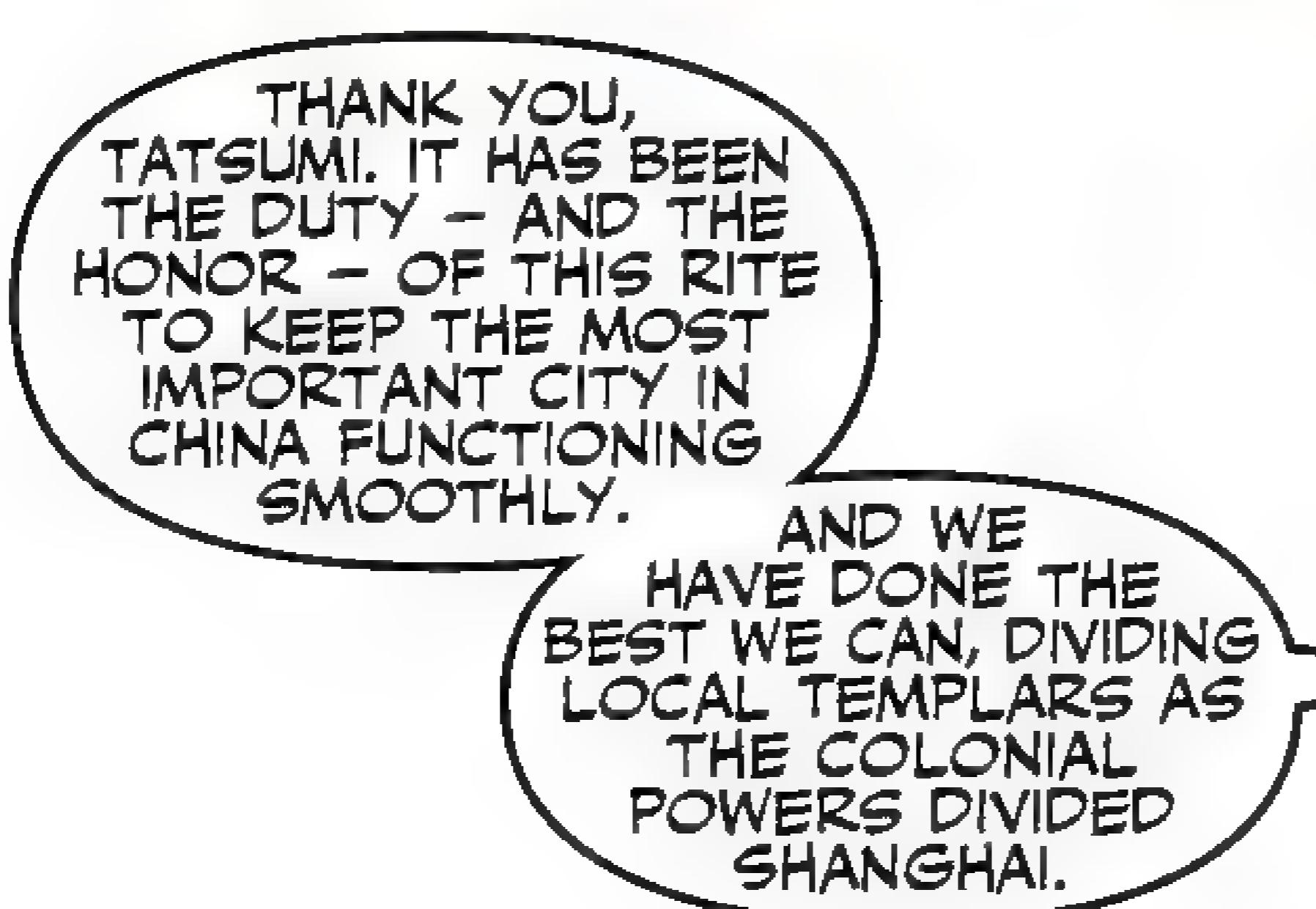
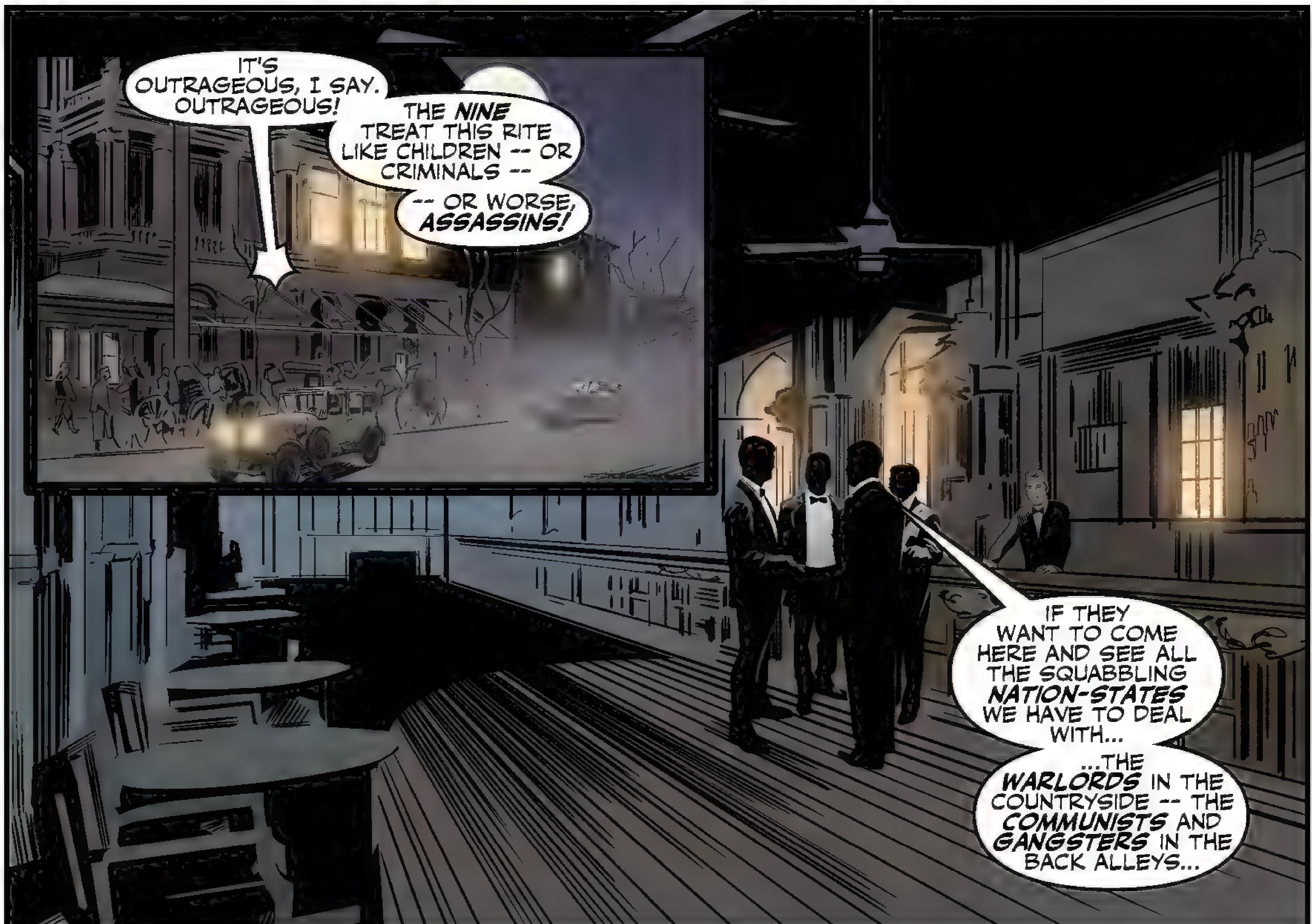


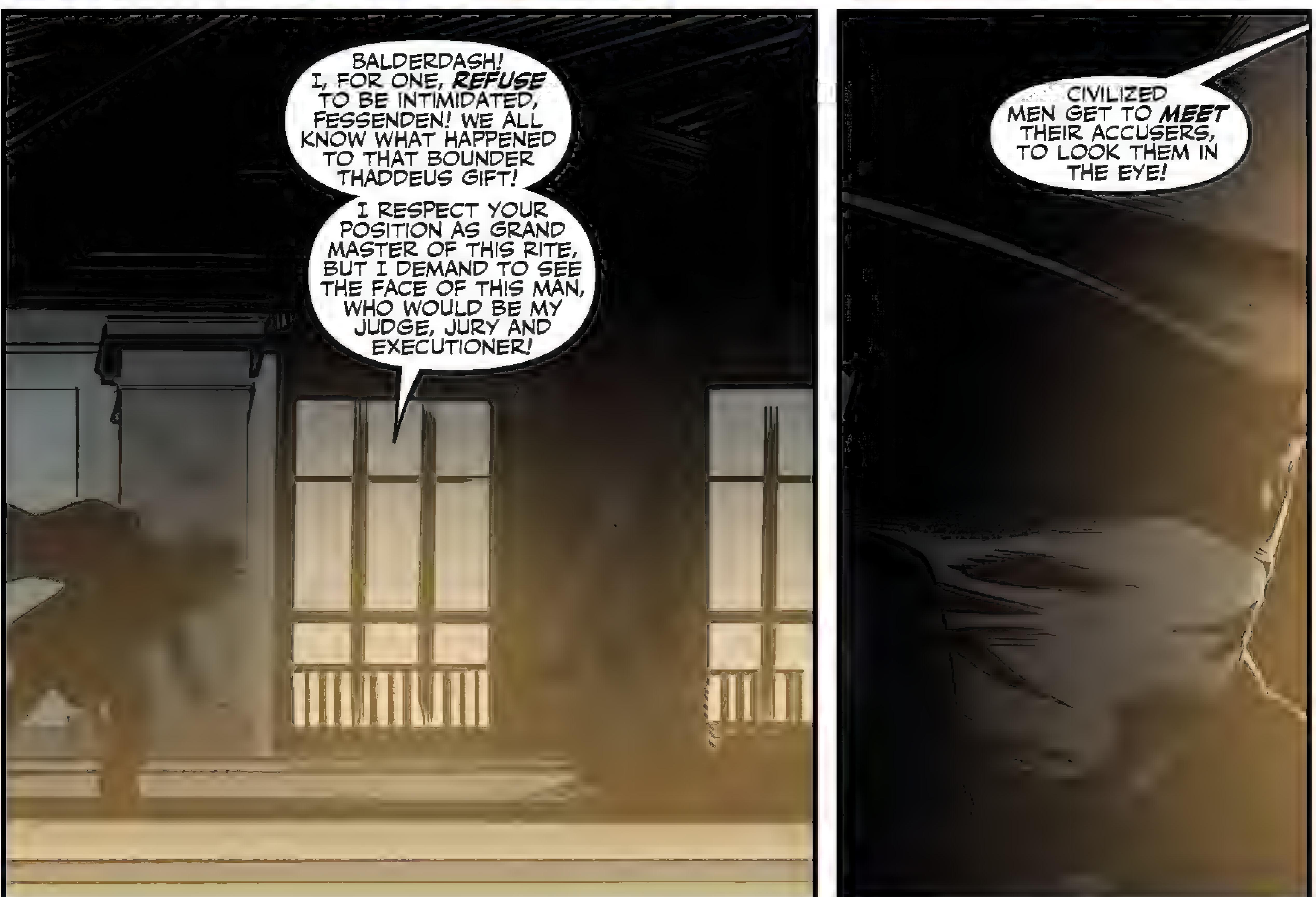
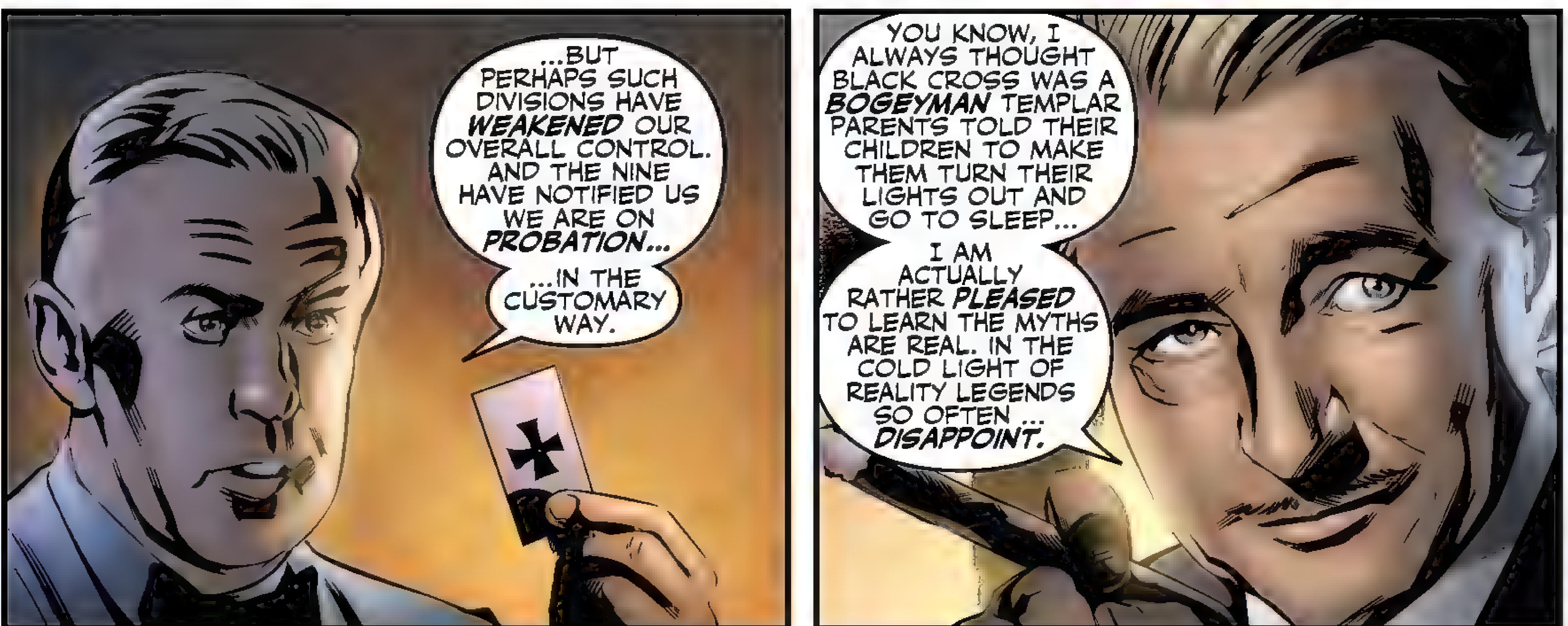


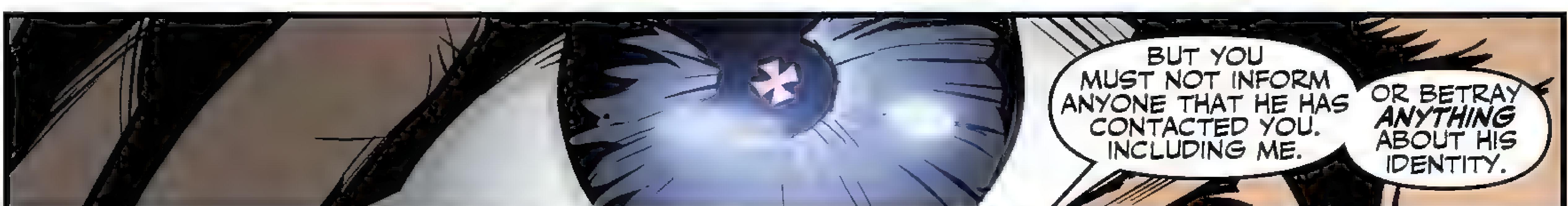
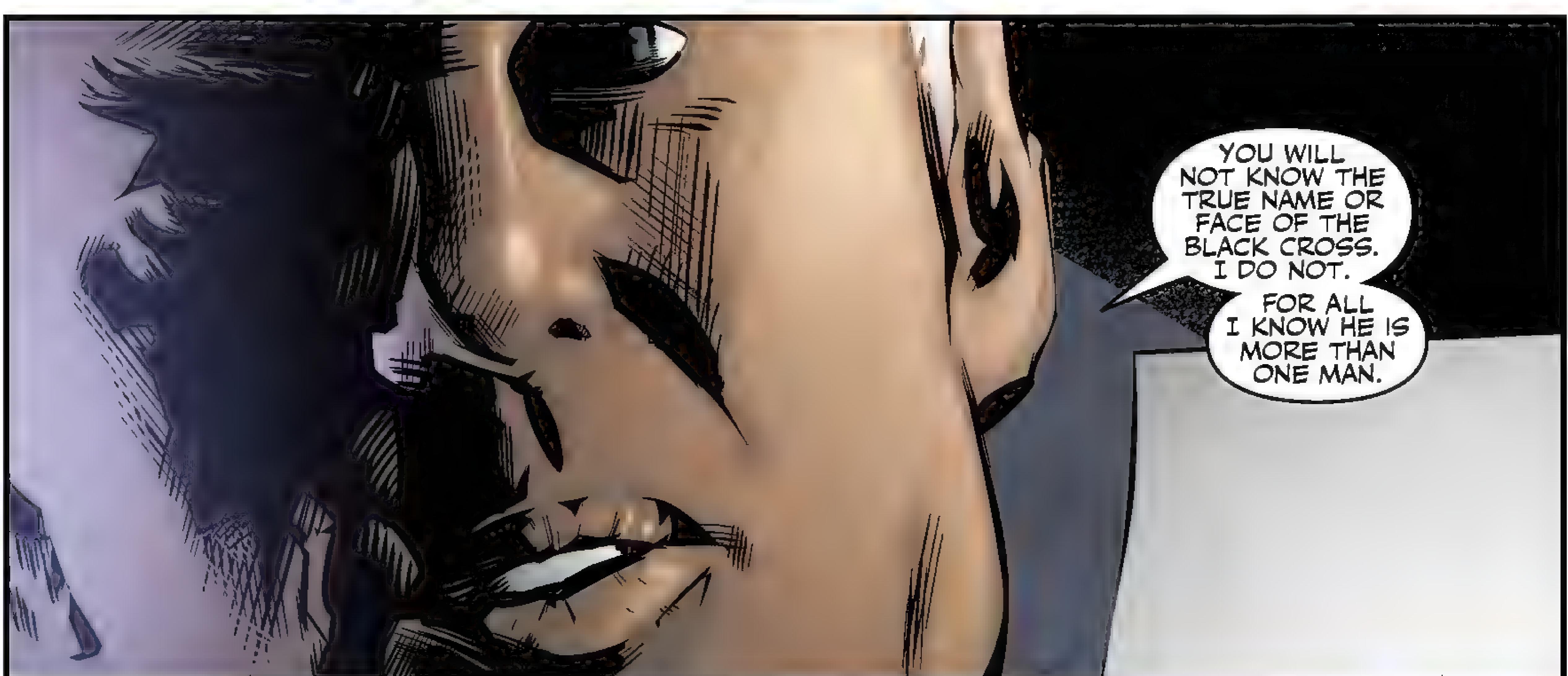


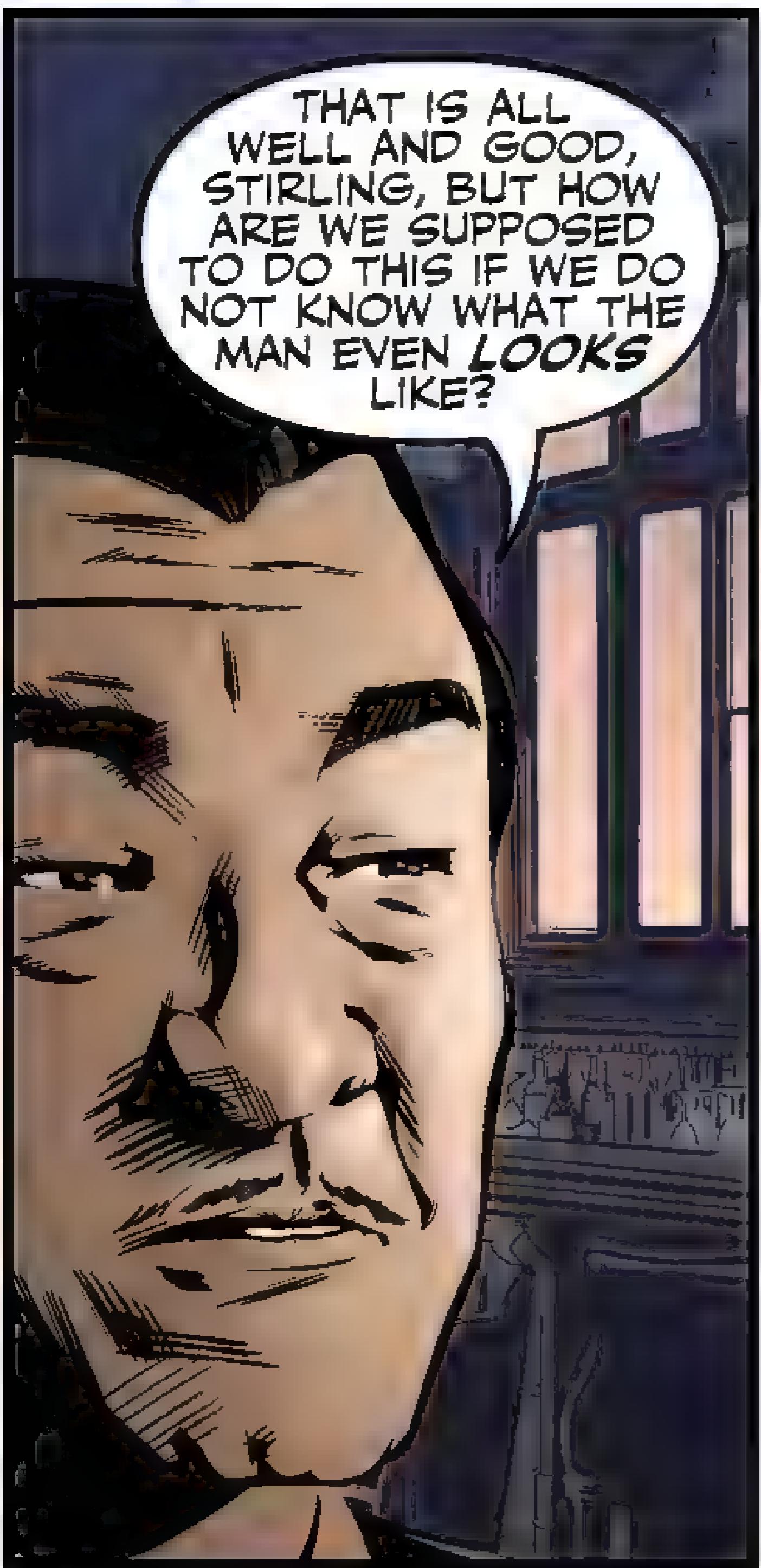







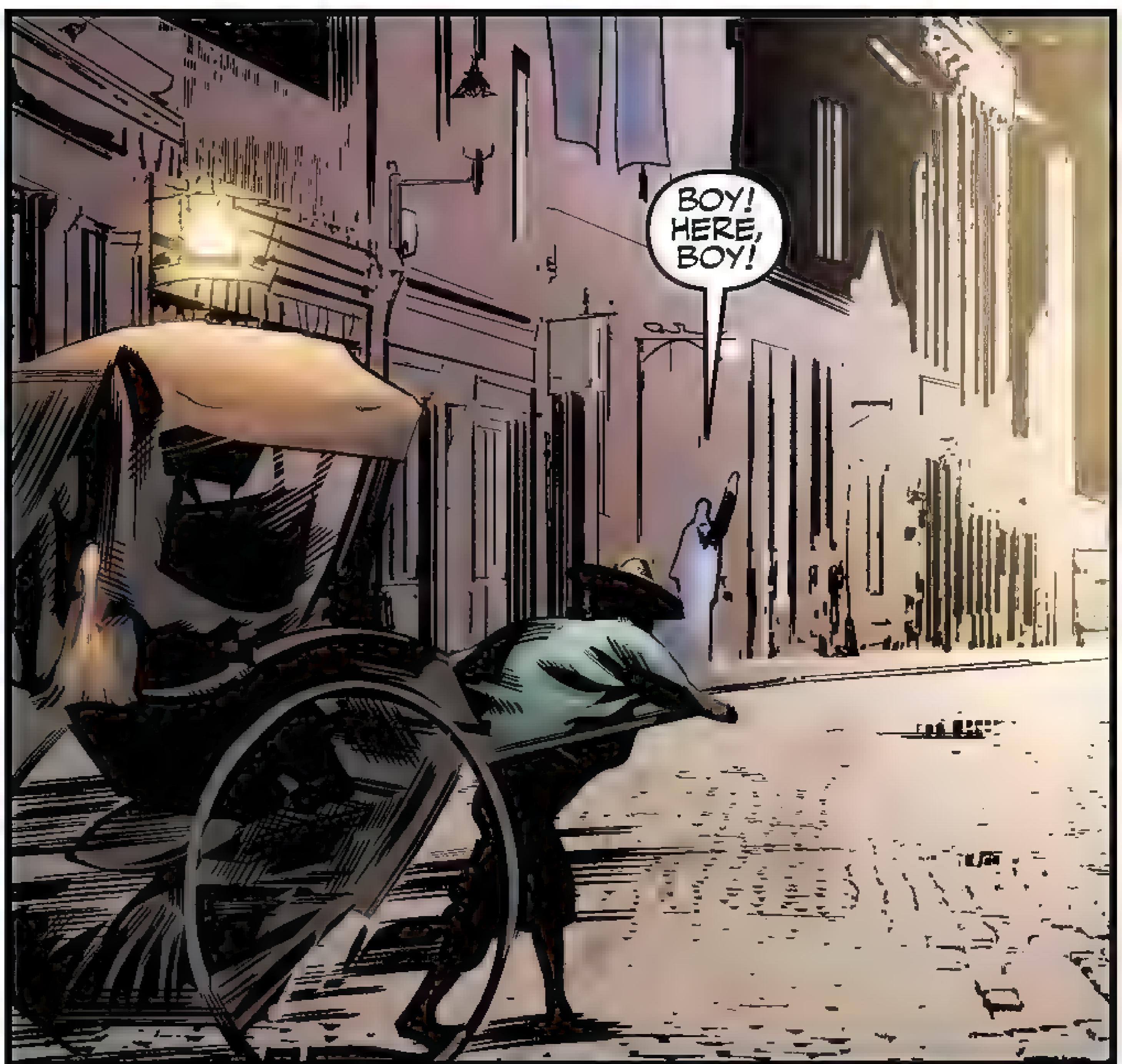


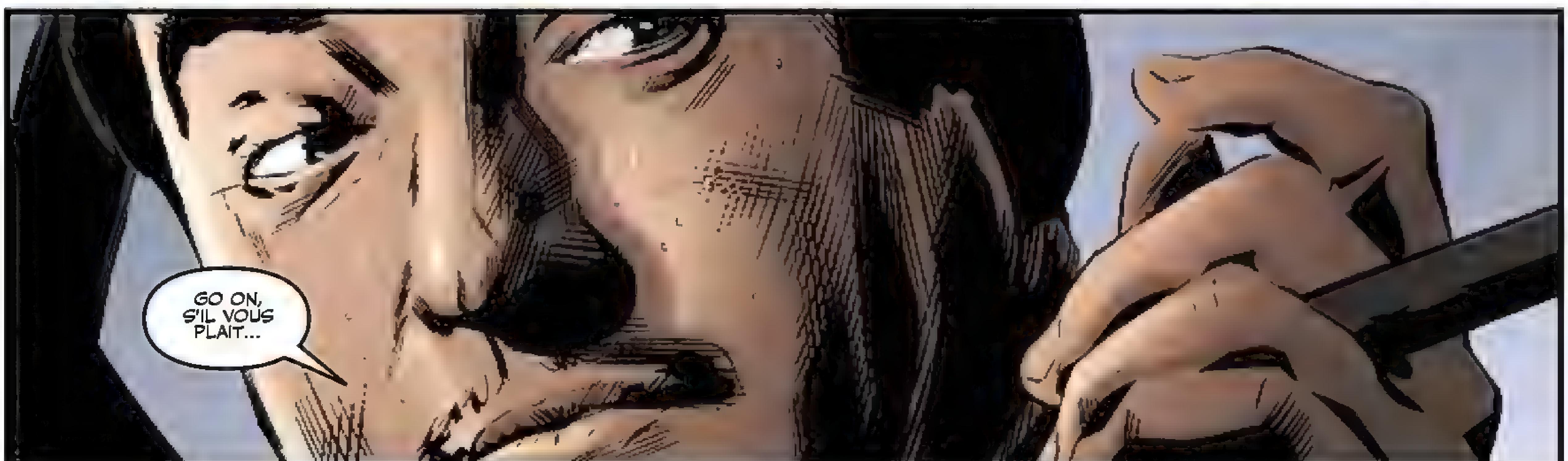


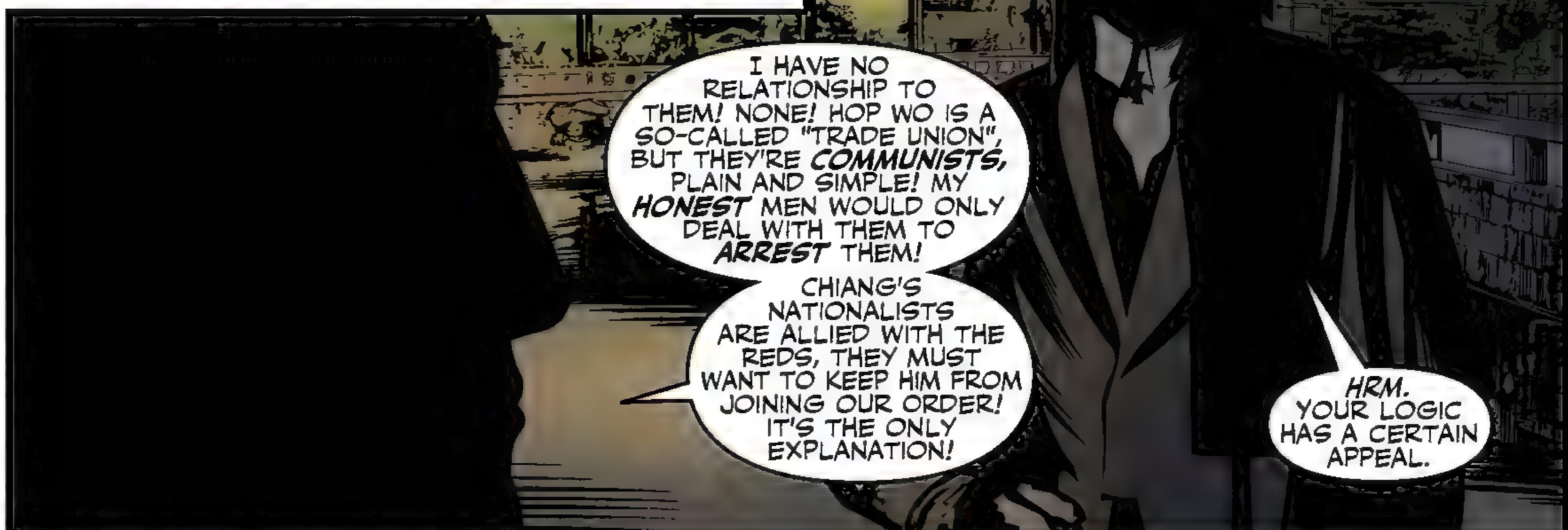
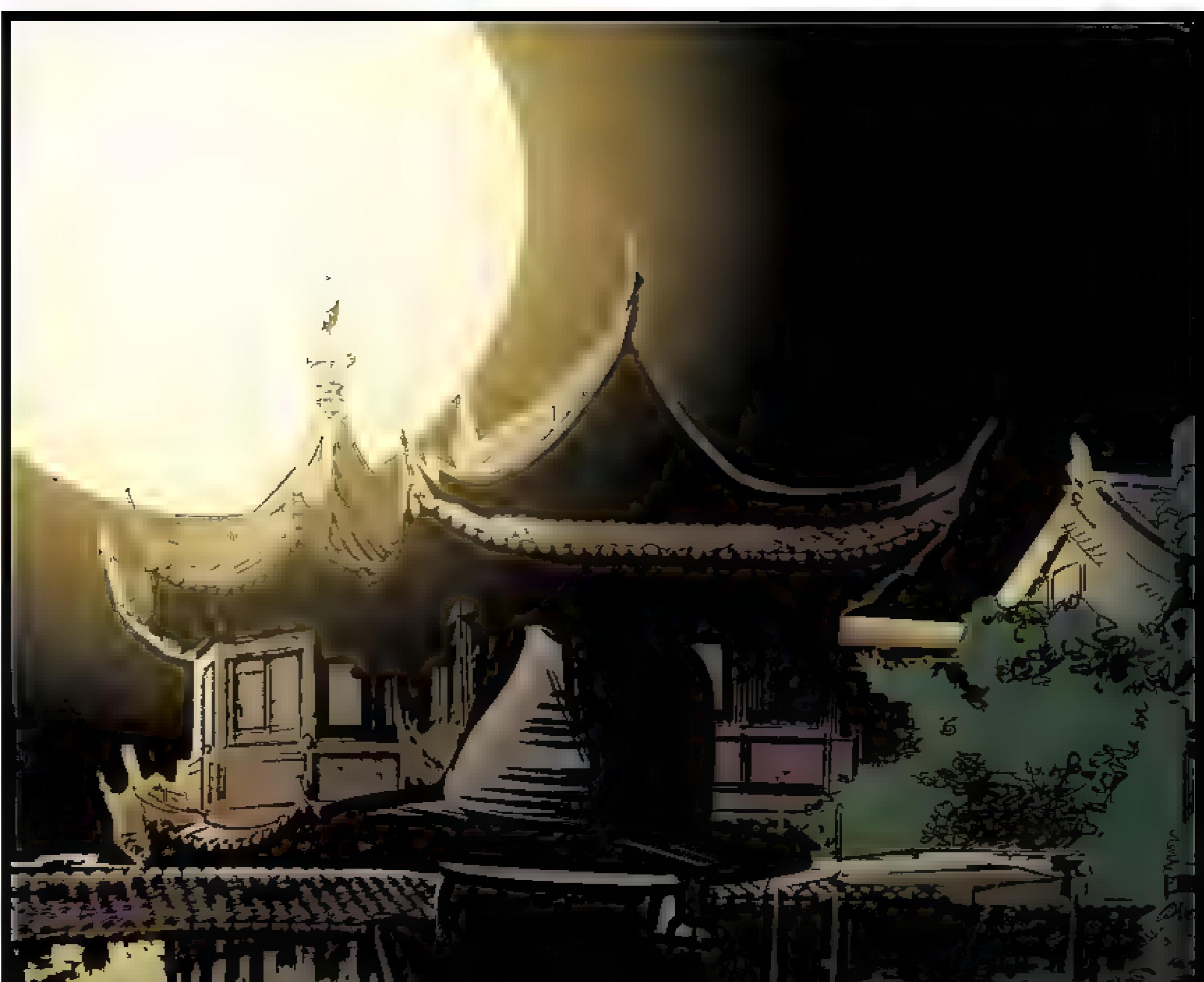


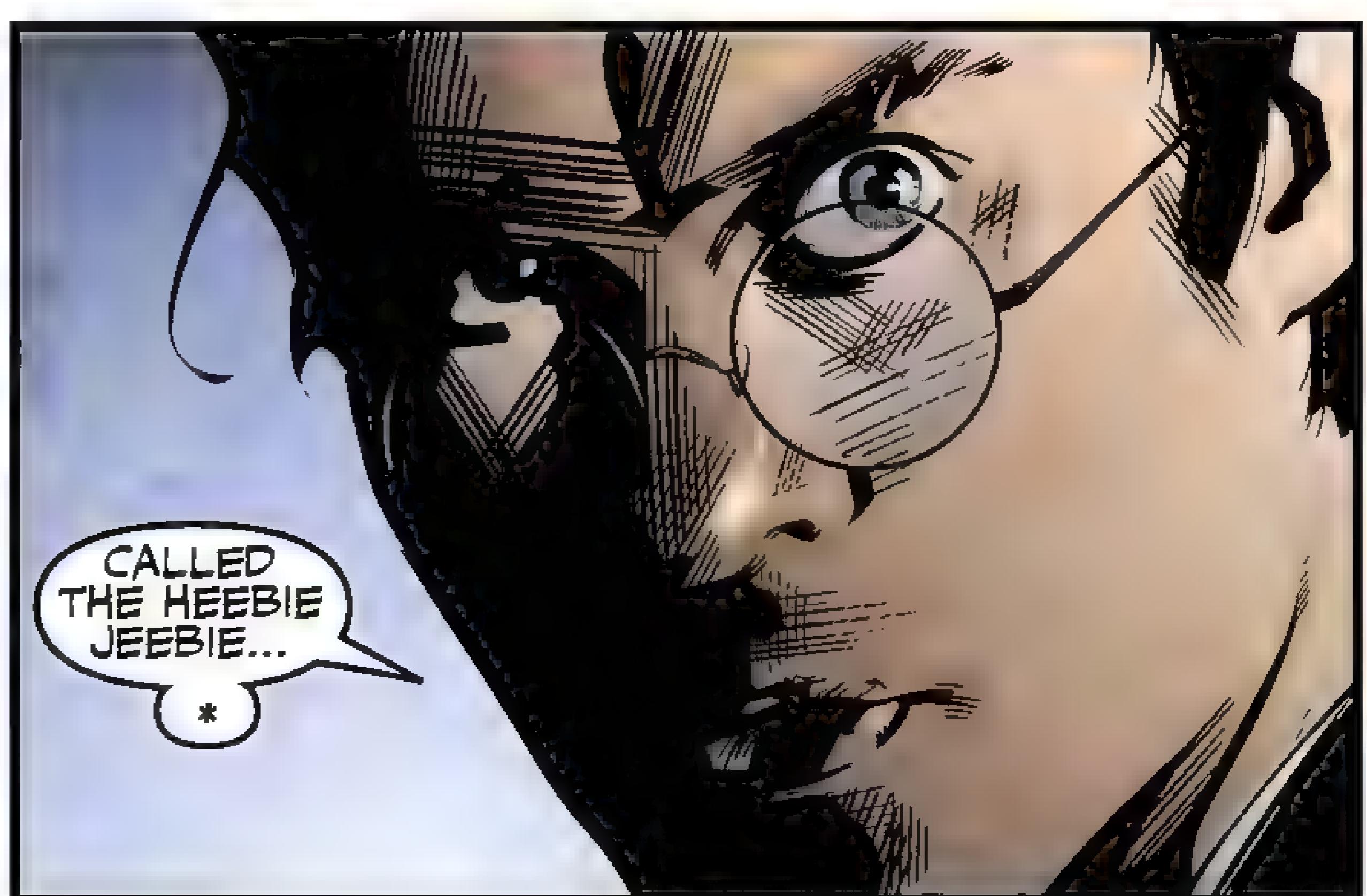
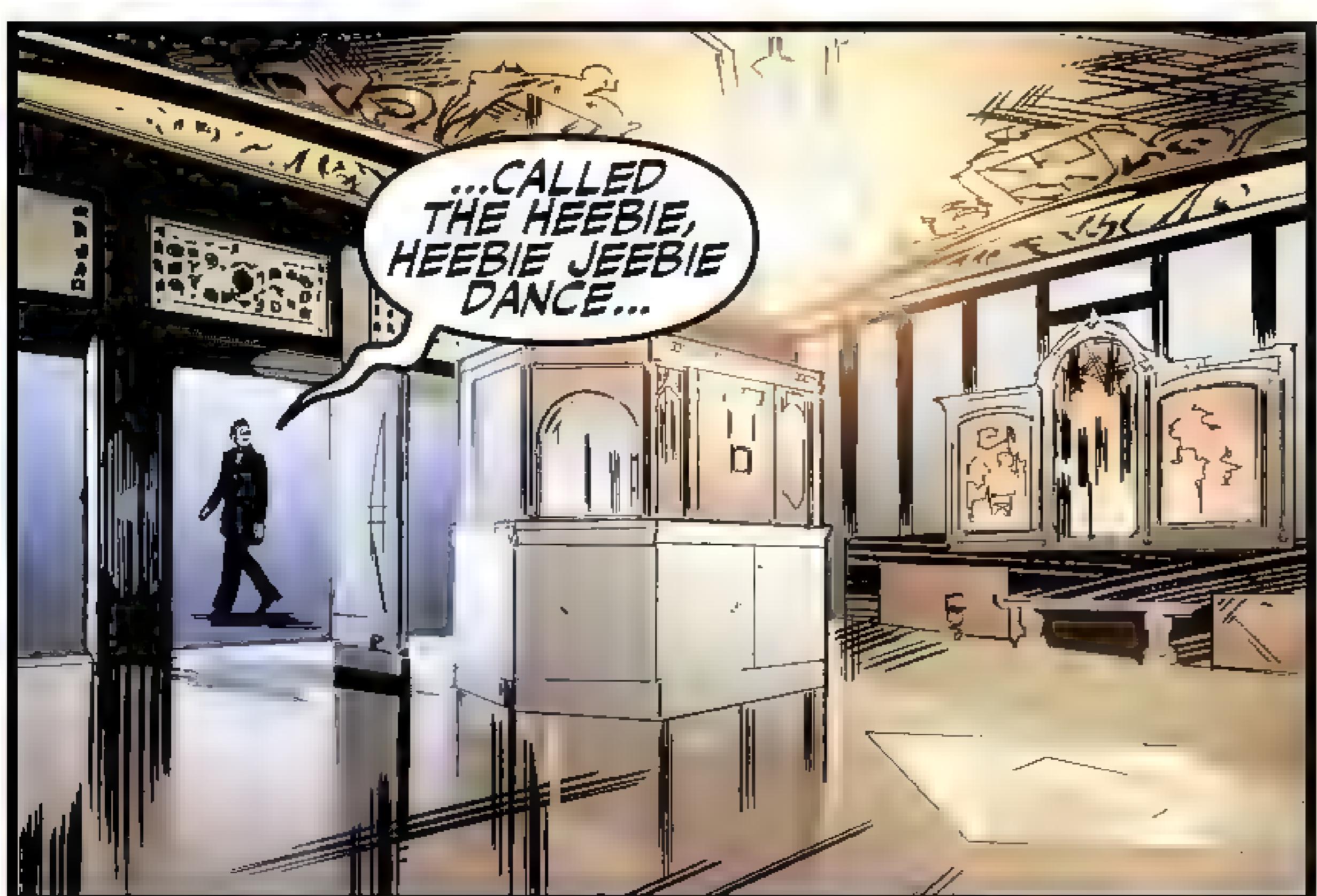


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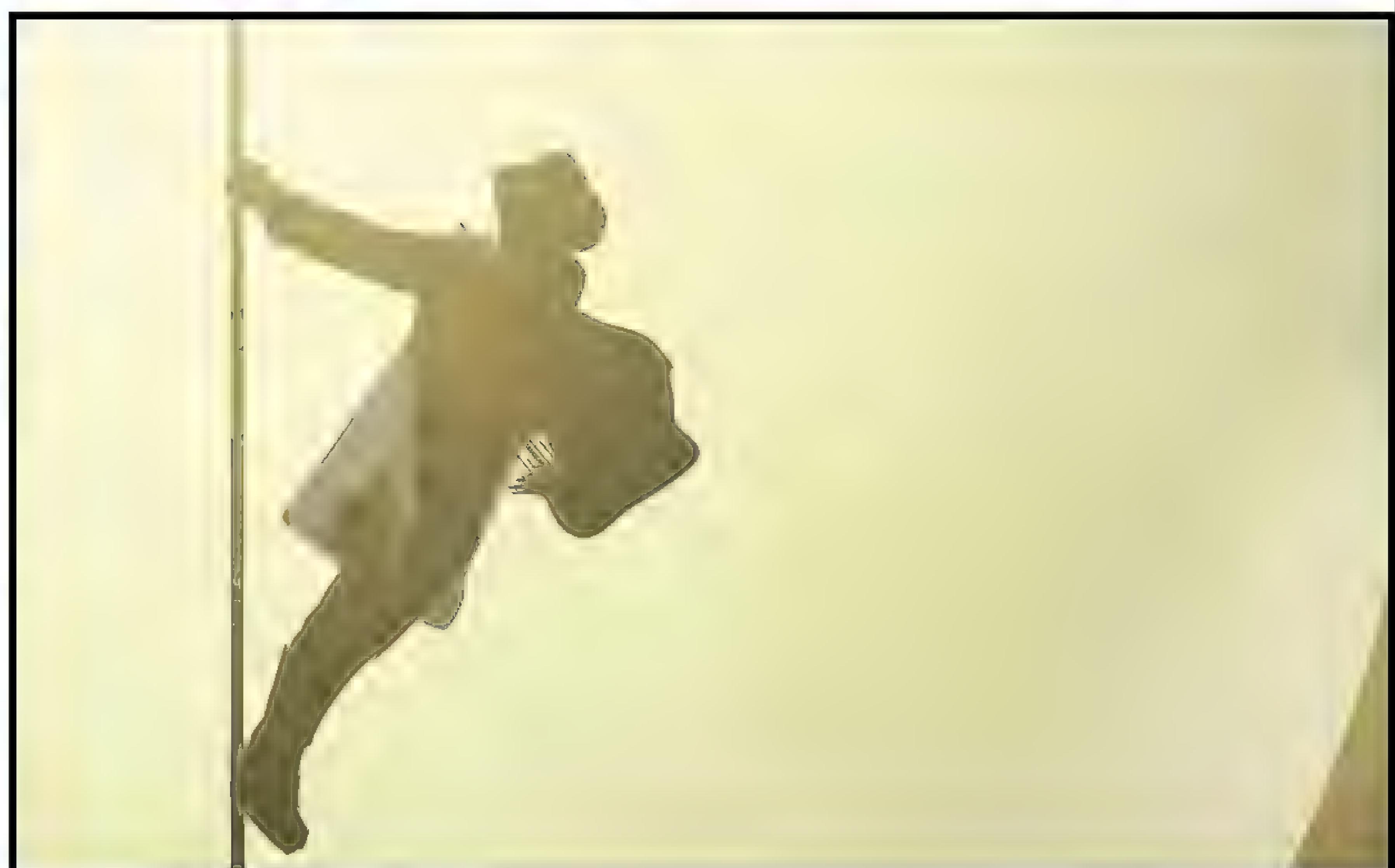



















# ASSASSIN'S CREED® TEMPLARS

## BLACK CROSS

PART 2 OF 5

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**WRITER**  
FRED VAN LENTE

+  
**ARTIST**  
DENNIS CALERO

**LETTERER**  
RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT'S  
JIMMY BETANCOURT

+  
**COLORIST**  
DENNIS CALERO

+  
**SENIOR EDITOR**  
ANDREW JAMES

+  
**EDITOR**  
LIZZIE KAYE

+  
**DESIGNER**  
ROB FARMER



**TITAN COMICS**

**TITAN COMICS EDITORIAL** Tom Williams,  
Jessica Burton & Gabriela Houston

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT** Peter James

**PRODUCTION SUPERVISORS** Jackie Flook,  
Maria Pearson

**PRODUCTION MANAGER** Obi Onuora

**STUDIO MANAGER** Selina Juneja

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Ricky Clayton

**COMMERCIAL MANAGER** Michelle Fairlamb

**PUBLISHING MANAGER** Darryl Tothill

**PUBLISHING DIRECTOR** Chris Teather

**OPERATIONS DIRECTOR** Leigh Baulch

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** Vivian Cheung

**PUBLISHER** Nick Landau

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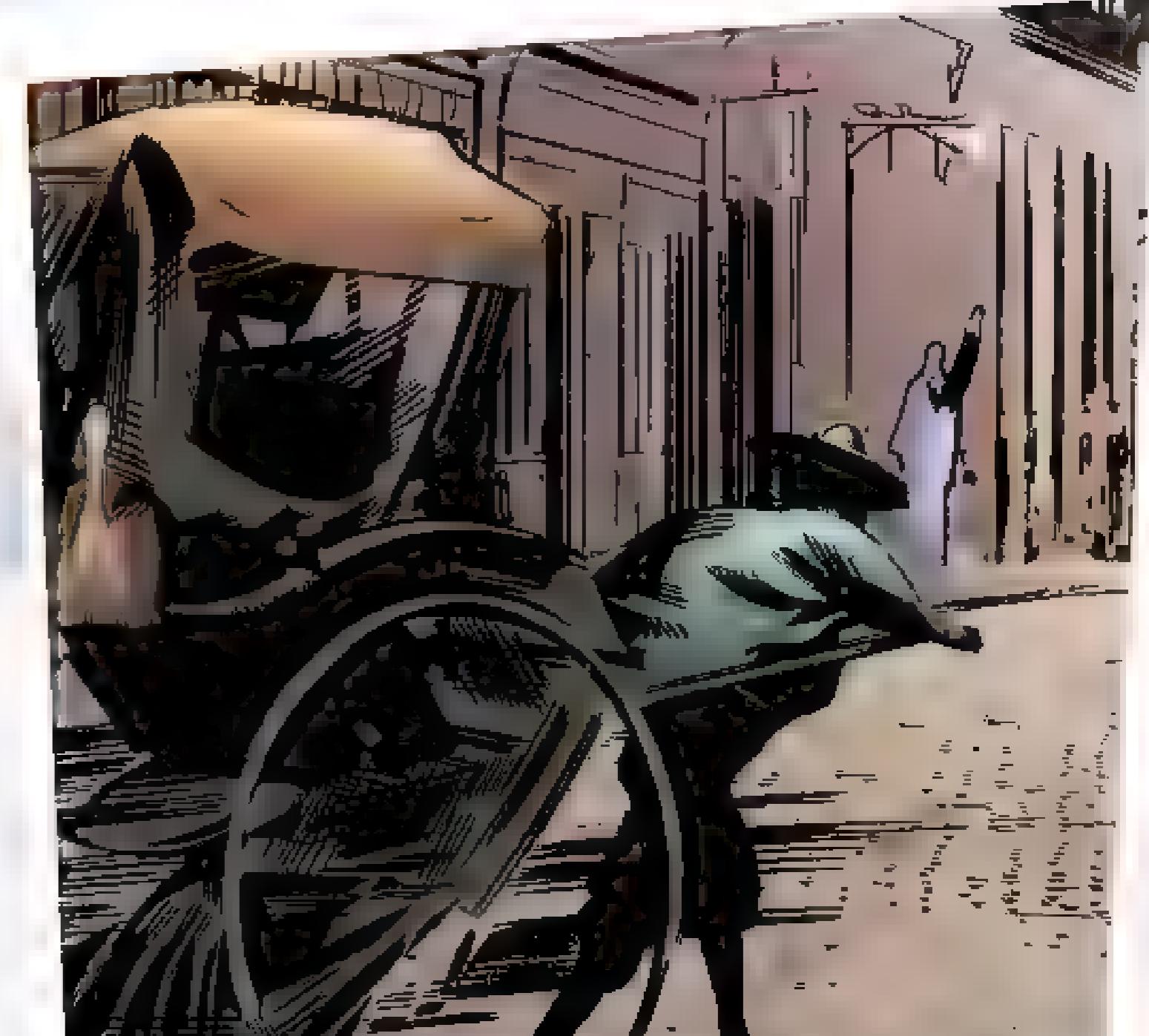


# NEXT ON SALE JUNE ISSUE



## SONGS AND SCREAMS

Surrounded by enemies, out-manned and out-gunned, Black Cross descends deep into the murky Shanghai underworld. He's looking for answers and for the next clue that will lead him to his ultimate goal. Alone and unarmed, he comes face to face with the very thing he is seeking... but will he get the chance to use that hard won knowledge?



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# ASSASSIN'S CREED TEMPLARS

## THE CITY, THE SEA AND THE SHANGHAI BUND...

**T**oday, Shanghai is not just China's largest city but also the world's. It has a population of 24 million people and is the country's financial and economic hub, as well as being the world's busiest container shipping port. And it's the port that has made the city - sat on the Huangpu River - a manmade tributary of the Yangtze River, a source of international intrigue, power struggles and hostility.

Shanghai was one of a number of ports opened up to foreigners after the signing of the Treaty of Nanking in 1842. The treaty was struck between China and Britain and it was agreed that land would be given over to the British in the city so they could more closely control their interests.

Naturally, the new arrivals chose to be situated where they could keep the keenest eye on those interests - the banks lining the Huangpu River. And with them they brought their own aesthetics and styles. Westernised buildings began to appear along a section of the riverfront known as The Bund. The British were joined by the United States in 1844 and a Concession was granted to the French in 1848. In 1868, the foreign powers

consolidated their hold into the Shanghai International Settlement and a legal and bureaucratic headache of epic proportions was born for all involved.

The running of the Settlement fell to the largely British-controlled Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC). As western influence made itself felt, the SMC took over virtually all aspects of daily life within the Settlement, despite the fact that it was not actually a foreign colony - it was still, on paper, controlled by the Chinese government, and should have been operated along the lines of an embassy or foreign consulate.

However, it was very much a self-contained entity. The SMC acquired local companies to provide power and utilities; it had its own police force and legal system; it even controlled the transport network, its trams and rickshaws. Drivers of the latter were said to need three licenses to ply their trade - one for the Chinese areas of the city, one for the Settlement, and another for the French Concession! Such rigorously maintained bureaucracy naturally led to friction with the local Chinese and the British found themselves at the receiving

end of a serious international incident when members of the Shanghai Municipal Police opened fire on Chinese protestors on May 30th, 1925.

The Municipal Police was largely recruited from locals, but foreigners, once again largely British and Commonwealth officers, filled the higher ranks; there was also a large contingent of Japanese. Within the Settlement, Japanese-controlled cotton mills had become the focus of sometimes-violent demonstrations. After a Japanese foreman shot one of the demonstrators, rioting, mass protests and strikes followed.

The situation was exacerbated by the arrest of a number of Chinese students within the Settlement. Crowds gathered outside the police station where they were being held. Naturally, reports of what followed are at best confused, with the policemen in the station claiming that the crowd had turned violent and were attempting to force their way into the station, hoping to release the imprisoned students. In the melee, the officer in charge apparently opened fire on the protestors, triggering a volley from his men. As many as nine people in the crowd were killed and many others gravely injured.

The incident instigated a wave of rioting and strikes that left hundreds

dead and seriously threatened foreign, and in particular British, interests in the Settlement. However, while Britain did not find itself directly culpable for the shootings, the threat to the Settlement's economic wellbeing, as well as pressure from its foreign partners, was enough to institute major change to the way the Settlement was run.

Despite the sometimes-volatile nature of the Settlement, it maintained a reputation for luxury and wealth. The Roaring Twenties were not lost on the foreigners living in Shanghai and the Settlement brimmed with nightclubs and dancehalls that swung to the raucous sound of Jazz.

The Bund itself housed a number of luxury hotels, banks and offices, built in a plethora of styles – Gothic, Renaissance, Neo-Classical and, of course, Art Deco. Amongst the most famous is the Shanghai Club Building, built in 1864 to house a men's club for members of the then British Concession. The original was torn down and replaced in 1910 by a Baroque Rival structure six storeys high that remained one of Shanghai's most exclusive venues during the 1920s. Another, the Palace Hotel, was the vision of Sir Victor Sassoon. Construction began in 1927, and the building, which survived the Japanese invasion of 1937, remains a jewel on the Bund, and one of Shanghai's most popular attractions. ▲

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